

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending. By this Response, claim 20 is amended. Reconsideration and allowance based on the above amendment and below comments are respectfully requested.

Claim Amendment

Applicant notes that claim 20 has been amended to correct for minor grammatical and wording errors. Applicant submits that the amendments have not been made in view of the cited prior art.

Prior Art Rejections

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5, 8-10, 13, 15-16 and 18-20 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Mann, et al. (US Pub. No. 2002/0169867) and claims 6-7, 11-12, 14 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being anticipated by Mann in view of DeBettencourt, et al. (US 6,279,001). These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claim 1

Claim 1 recites, *inter alia*, an equipment management apparatus, connected to at least one of the plurality of communications apparatuses through the network, for monitoring and controlling the at least one of the plurality of communication apparatuses; and a directory apparatus for

managing connection relations between the plurality of communications apparatuses and the equipment management apparatus, wherein the equipment management apparatus includes a directory client for transmitting and obtaining request for obtaining a connection relation and receiving the connection relation corresponding to the obtaining request, and the directory apparatus includes a directory information base for storing the connection relations and a directory server for receiving the obtaining requests from the directory client, searching the directory information base in order to detect the connection relation corresponding to the obtaining request, and transmitting the connection relation having been detected to the directory client.

In embodiments of the present invention, the directory apparatus manages connection relationships between the equipment management apparatus and plurality of communication devices. A request sent by an equipment management apparatus to the directory apparatus initiates the directory apparatus to obtain the connections associated with the request.

In contrast, Mann teaches a data communications network that includes a network control console (NCC) 12, located within a network operation center (NOC) 16, a point of presence (POP) 26 and a broker 24. The POPs are in communication with the NOC over a bus 22. The NCC monitors and manages the data network management system and serves as the communication interface between the data network management system and system administrator. The broker mediates requests to and from networked clients.

The broker determine where published information should be sent based upon subscription information.

The Office Action alleges that the NOC corresponds to applicant's claimed equipment management apparatus and that the broker corresponds to applicant's claimed directory apparatus. Applicants respectfully submit that nowhere in Mann does it teach that the NOC includes a directory client which is used to send and also obtain requests from the directory apparatus in order to obtain a connection relationship. Furthermore, the Broker is used to mediate requests to and from clients, not the NOC itself. This is in direct contrast to the present invention as recited in claim 1, where the directory apparatus is in communication with the equipment management apparatus and receives requests from the equipment management apparatus, not network clients.

Moreover, the broker is used to manage a location where data is sent based on subscription information. The broker does not manage connection information between devices, as does the directory apparatus recited in claim 1.

Therefore, in view of the above, Mann fails to teach each and every feature recited in claim 1 as required. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection with regards to claim 1 are respectfully requested.

Claim 18

Claim 18 recites, *inter alia*, a directory information base for storing connection relations defining communications paths between a plurality of communications apparatuses and a plurality of equipment management apparatuses which monitor and control the plurality of communications apparatuses; and a directory server for receiving and obtaining requests for obtaining a connection relation, searching the directory information base in order to detect the connection relation corresponding to a received obtaining request, and transmitting a detected connection relation.

In Mann, a directory apparatus that manages the connection relations that define communication paths between a plurality of communication apparatuses and a plurality of equipment management apparatuses, is not taught. Mann teaches the use of a broker 24 which routes events to various addresses based on subscription information. The broker does not manage the connection relations between various apparatuses. Further, the broker does not receive requests asking for various connection relationships that define the communication between a plurality of apparatuses. See paragraph 25.

Therefore, Mann fails to teach each and every feature as recited in claim 18. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection with regard to claim 18 are respectfully requested.

Claim 20

Claim 20 recites, *inter alia*, storing connection relations for defining communication paths connecting the plurality of communications apparatuses and the plurality of equipment management apparatuses and a directory information base; receiving and obtaining a request for obtaining a connection relation; detecting the connection relation corresponding to a received obtaining request by way of searching the directory information base; and transmitting a detected connection relation.

As argued with respect to claims 1 and 18, Mann fails to teach storing connection relations defining the communications between apparatuses. Mann also fails to teach receiving an obtaining request for obtaining the connection relationship. At best, Mann teaches a broker 24 used to manage the sending of information to correct addresses based upon subscription information. The broker does not manage communication relations between apparatuses, let alone receive requests to do so.

Therefore, Mann fails to teach each and every feature of independent claim 20, as required. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

Dependent Claims

Applicants respectfully submit that DeBettencourt fails to make up for the deficiencies taught in Mann with regard to the independent claims. Accordingly, in view of the deficiencies of Mann, dependent claims 2-17 and 19 are likewise distinguishable over Mann alone or in combination with DeBettencourt.

Conclusion

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are novel in view of the cited art. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested. Applicants respectfully submit that the application is in condition for allowance and prompt allowance is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Chad J. Billings (Reg. No. 48,917) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

Appl. No. 09/893,648

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment(s)